TOLD in the TWILIGHT

BY

F.E. WEATHERLEY.

ILLUSTRATED BY

M. ELLEN. EDWARDS.

AND

JOHN C. STAPLES.

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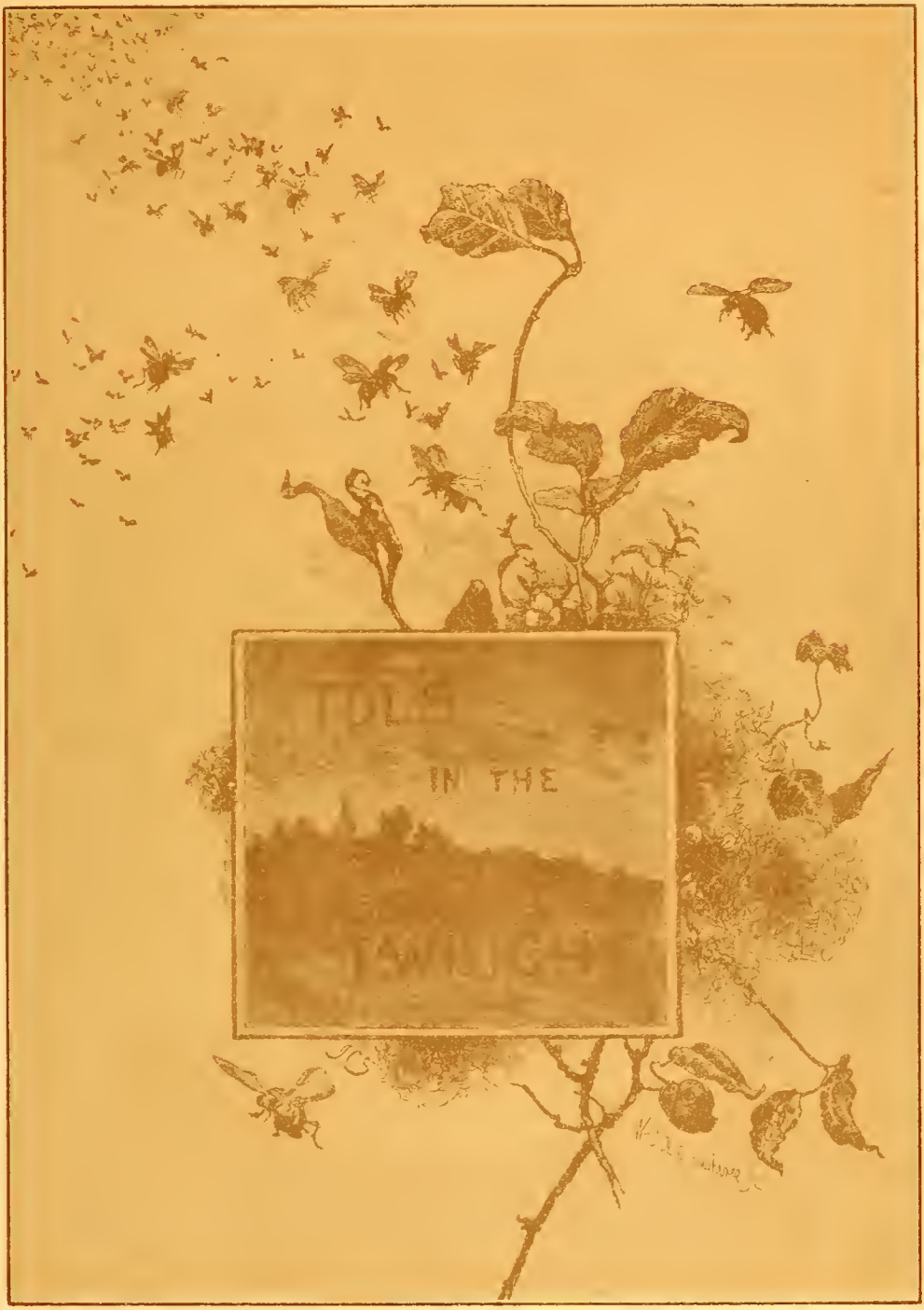
Edmund V. Patterson. A Christmas gift from Aunt Loulie - 1883. -


IN THE

TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT

by F. E. WEATHERLY

Illustrated by

M. ELLEN EDWARDS

&

JOHN C. STAPLES

NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY
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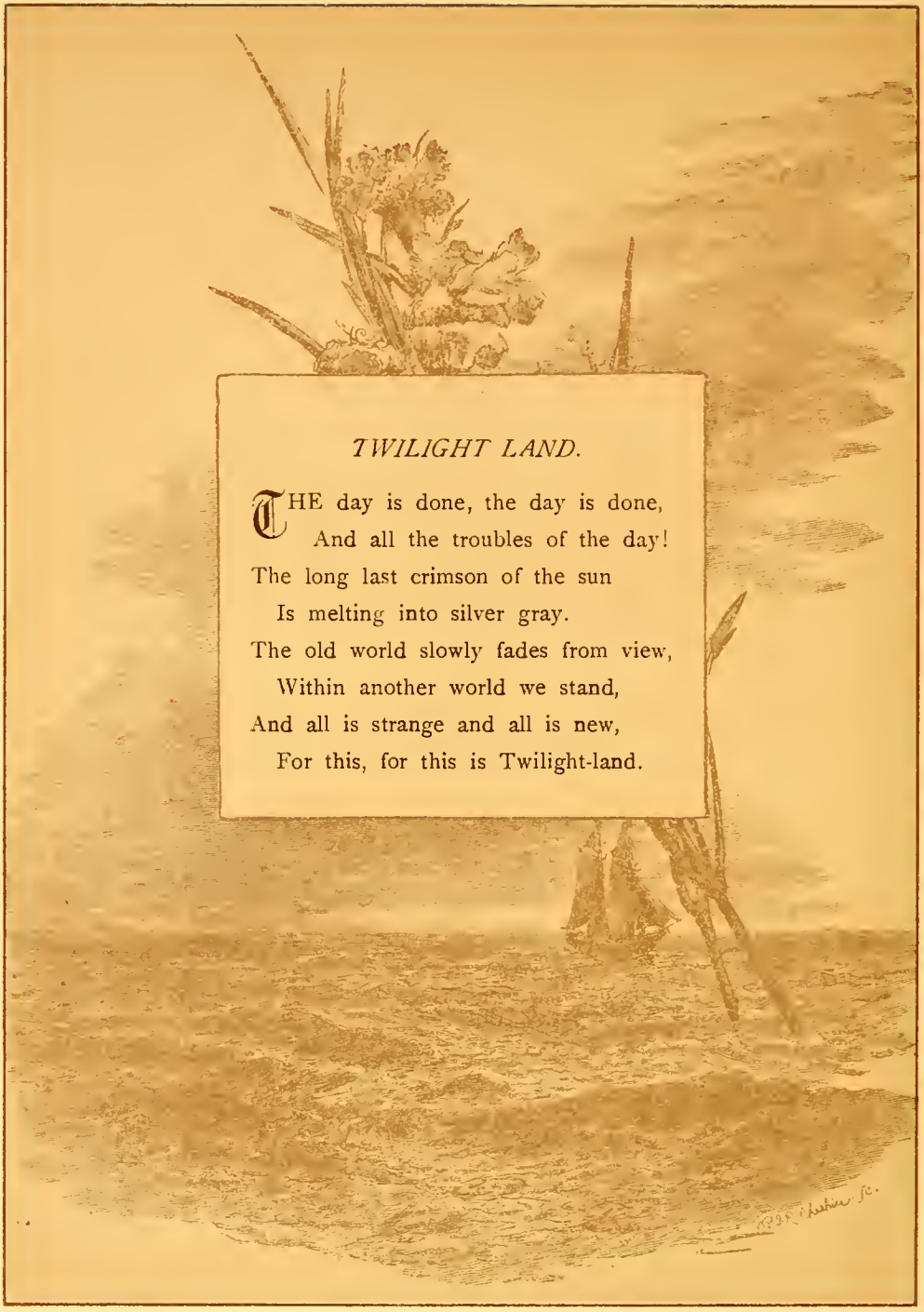
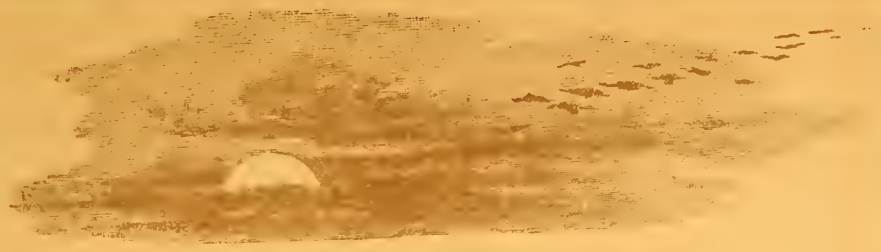


TWILIGHT LAND.

THE day is done, the day is done,
And all the troubles of the day!
The long last crimson of the sun
Is melting into silver gray.
The old world slowly fades from view,
Within another world we stand,
And all is strange and all is new,
For this, for this is Twilight-land.



THE TWILIGHT HOUR.

CHILDREN, who read these little rhymes,
Out of the Twilight-land sent clear,
There's many a one in these hurrying times,
Has not the time, like you, to hear.

But, children, this is your hour indeed;
And this is its beauty, this its power,
That all you love and that all you need
Comes to your hearts in the twilight hour.

This is the hour when dreams come true,
And life has never a tear or care,
When those you have lost come back to you,
And all your castles are strong and fair.

Then, children, who read, and I who write,—
Shall we not pray with all our power,
That whatever we lose of the world's delight,
We lose not the peace of the twilight hour?

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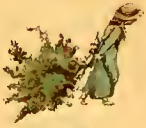

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BELL'S DREAM.

It was the little Isabel,
  Upon the sand she lay,
The summer sun struck hotly down,
  And she was tired of play,
And down she sank into the sea,
  Though how, she could not say.—

She stood within a dreadful court,
  Beneath the rolling tide,
There sate a sturgeon as a judge,
  Two lobsters at her side;
She had a sort of vague idea
  That she was being tried.

And then the jurymen came in,
  And, as the clock struck ten,
Rose Sergeant Shark and hitched his gown,
  And trifled with a pen,
"Ahem—may't please your Lordship,
  And gentle jurymen!

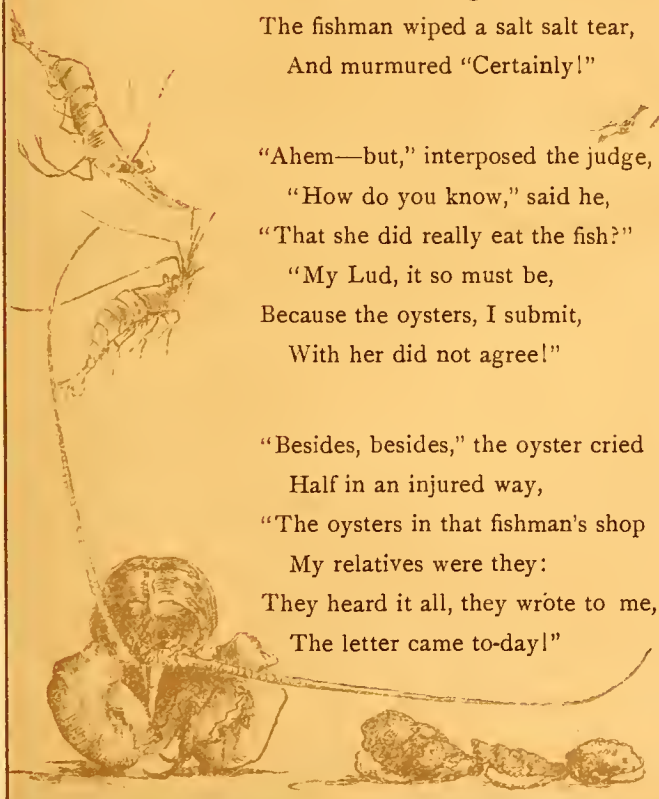
"The counts against the prisoner
  Before you, are that she
Has eaten salmon once at least,
  And soles most constantly,
Likewise devoured one hundred shrimps
  At Margate with her tea."

"Call witnesses!"—An oyster rose,
He spoke in plaintive tone,
"Last week her mother bought a fish,"
(He scarce could check a moan,)—
"He was a dear dear friend of mine,
His weight was half a stone!"

"No oysters, ma'am?" the fishman said,
"No, not to-day!" said she;
"My child is fond of salmon, but
Oysters do not agree!"
The fishman wiped a salt salt tear,
And murmured "Certainly!"

"Ahem—but," interposed the judge,
"How do you know," said he,
"That she did really eat the fish?"
"My Lud, it so must be,
Because the oysters, I submit,
With her did not agree!"

"Besides, besides," the oyster cried
Half in an injured way,
"The oysters in that fishman's shop
My relatives were they:
They heard it all, they wrote to me,
The letter came to-day!"



MEE

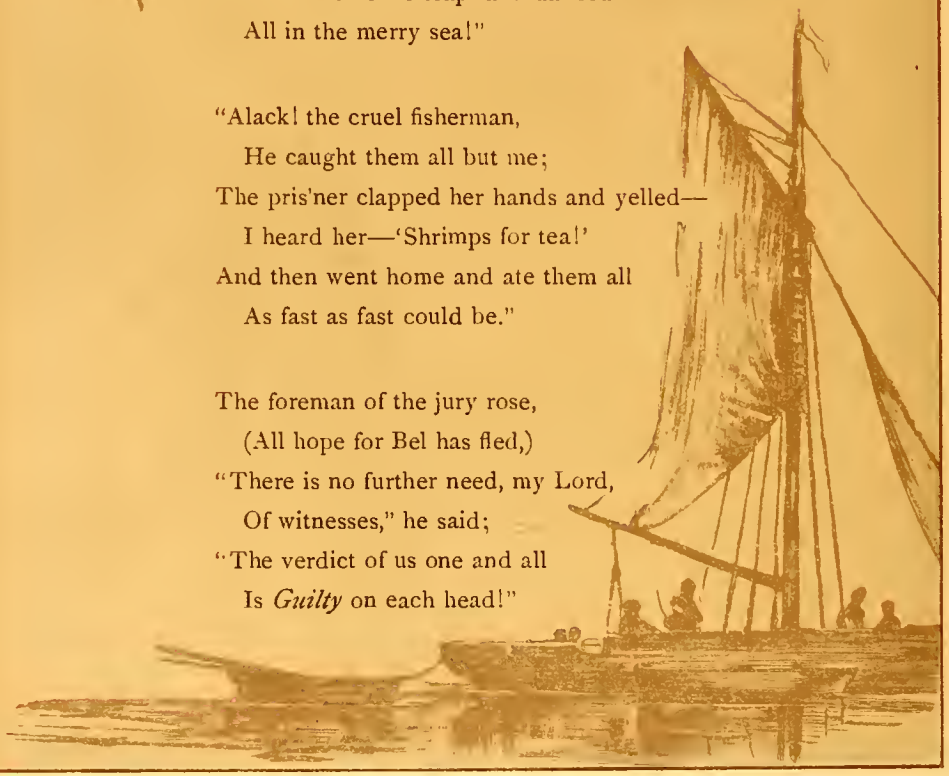
J.C.S.

"'Tis only hearsay evidence,"
The judge remarked, and smiled,
"But it will do in such a case,
With such a murd'rous child.—
Call the next witness!" for he saw
The jury getting wild.

And then uprose a little shrimp:
"I am the last," said he,
"Of what was once, as you all know,
A happy familee!
Without a care we leapt and danced
All in the merry sea!"

"Alack! the cruel fisherman,
He caught them all but me;
The pris'ner clapped her hands and yelled—
I heard her—'Shrimps for tea!'
And then went home and ate them all
As fast as fast could be."

The foreman of the jury rose,
(All hope for Bel has fled,)
"There is no further need, my Lord,
Of witnesses," he said;
"The verdict of us one and all
Is *Guilty* on each head!"



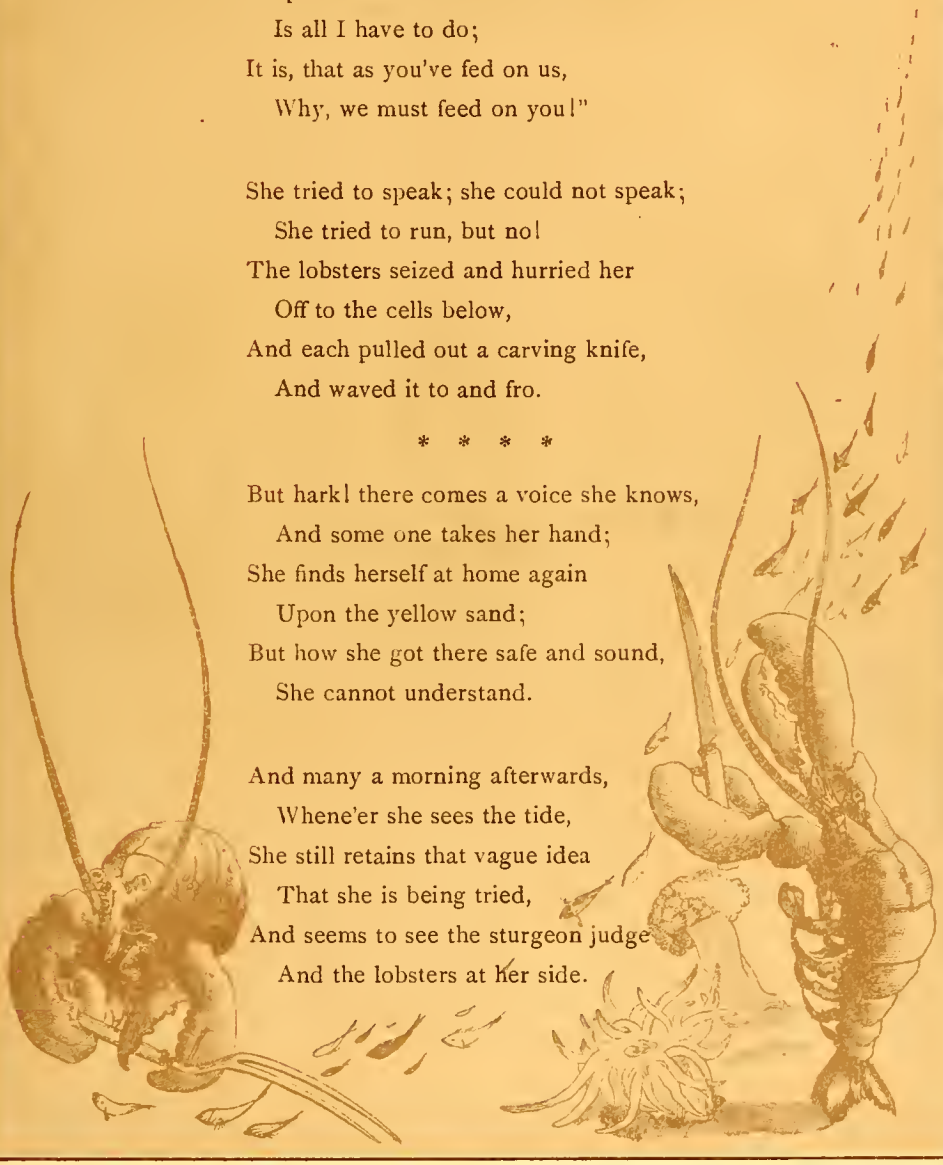
"*Guilty*," his Lordship said, and sighed,
"A verdict sad but true:
To pass the sentence of the court
Is all I have to do;
It is, that as you've fed on us,
Why, we must feed on you!"

She tried to speak; she could not speak;
She tried to run, but no!
The lobsters seized and hurried her
Off to the cells below,
And each pulled out a carving knife,
And waved it to and fro.

* * * *

But hark! there comes a voice she knows,
And some one takes her hand;
She finds herself at home again
Upon the yellow sand;
But how she got there safe and sound,
She cannot understand.

And many a morning afterwards,
Whene'er she sees the tide,
She still retains that vague idea
That she is being tried,
And seems to see the sturgeon judge
And the lobsters at her side.



Flow! Flow! O London river,
Just like life with thy rise and fall;
Storms and tears in thy heart forever,
Peace and rest at the end of all.

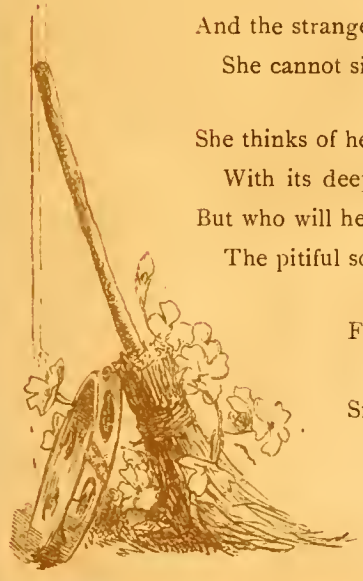
J.C.S.

LONDON RIVER.

All day long in the scorching weather,
All day long in the winter gloom,
Brother and sister stand together,
She with her flowers and he with his broom.

And the folks go on over London river,
Poor and wealthy, busy and wise,
Will nobody see those white lips quiver?
Will nobody stop for those pleading eyes?

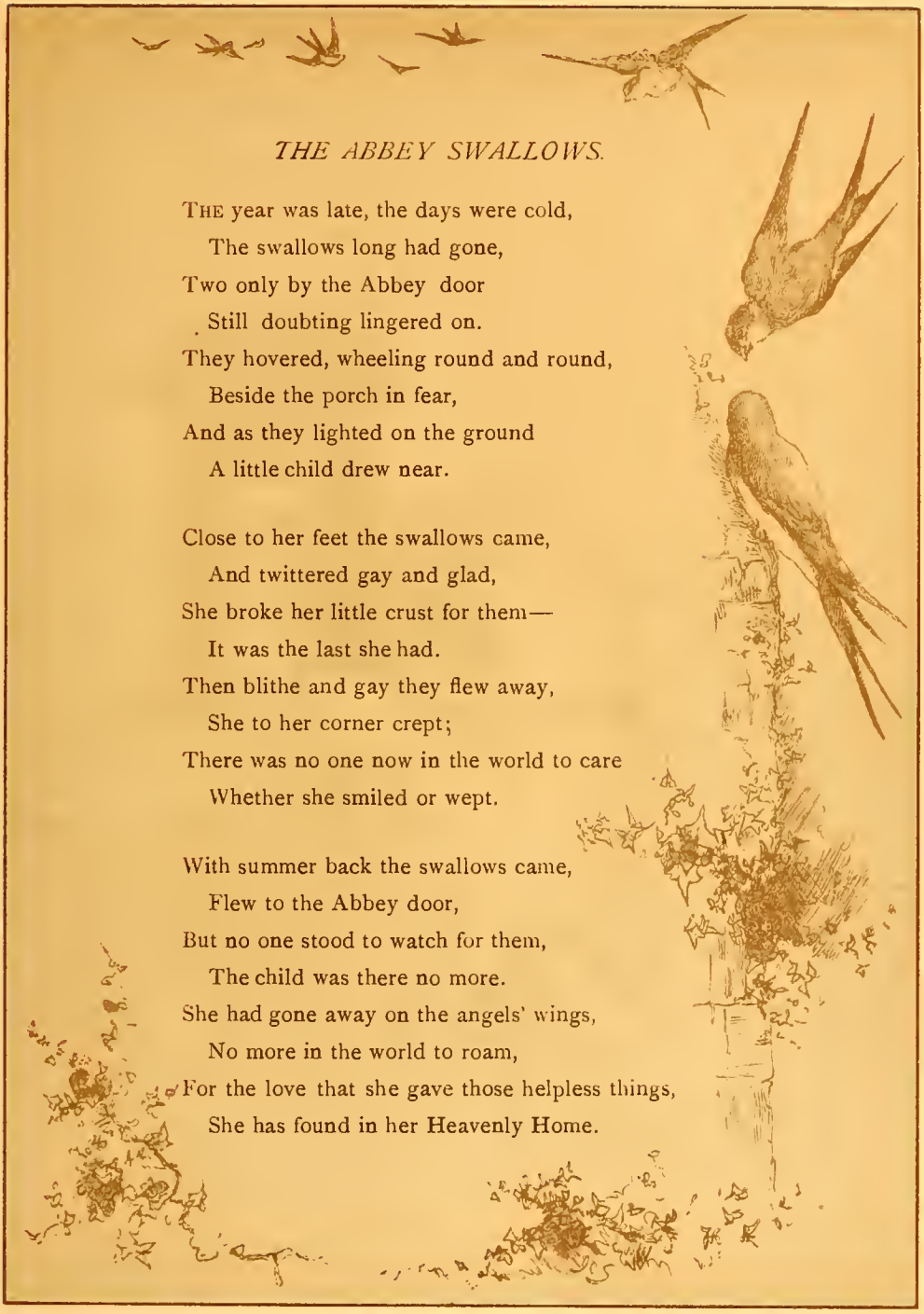
The old bridge echoes the ceaseless thunder
Of crowds that gather and stream along,
And the stranger child shrinks back in wonder,
She cannot sing in that hurrying throng.



She thinks of her home across the ocean,
With its deep blue sky and its vineyards green;
But who will heed, in that wild commotion,
The pitiful sound of her tambourine?

Flow! flow! O London river,
Carry thy ships from the migthy town,
Smiles and tears in thy heart for ever,
Smiles and tears as thou hurriest down!

J. C. S.



THE ABBEY SWALLOWS.

THE year was late, the days were cold,
The swallows long had gone,
Two only by the Abbey door
Still doubting lingered on.
They hovered, wheeling round and round,
Beside the porch in fear,
And as they lighted on the ground
A little child drew near.

Close to her feet the swallows came,
And twittered gay and glad,
She broke her little crust for them—
It was the last she had.
Then blithe and gay they flew away,
She to her corner crept;
There was no one now in the world to care
Whether she smiled or wept.

With summer back the swallows came,
Flew to the Abbey door,
But no one stood to watch for them,
The child was there no more.
She had gone away on the angels' wings,
No more in the world to roam,
For the love that she gave those helpless things,
She has found in her Heavenly Home.

THE MISGUIDED LAMB.

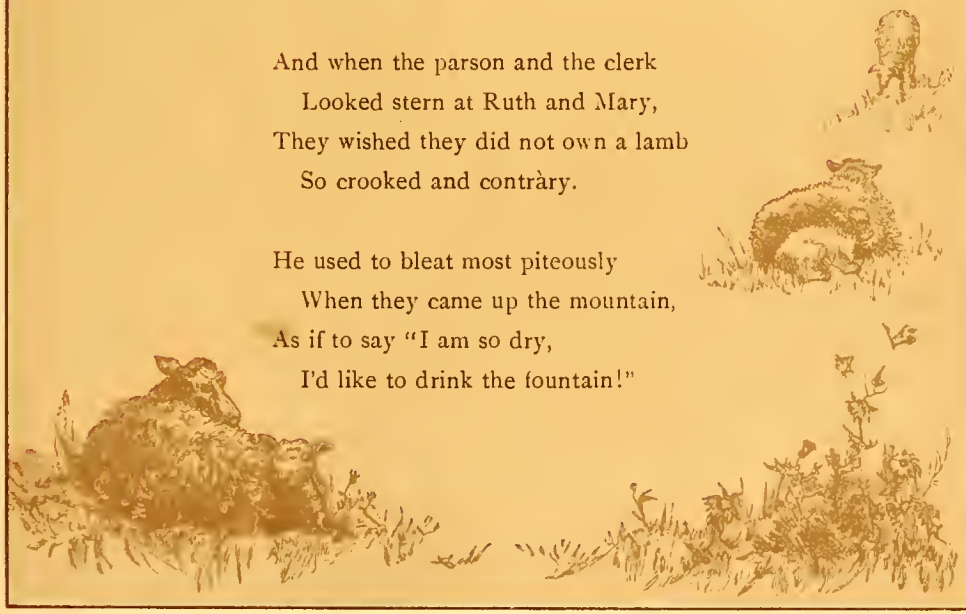
THERE were two little girls who had
A fond devoted Mammy,
But spent their warm affections on
A most ungrateful lamb-y,

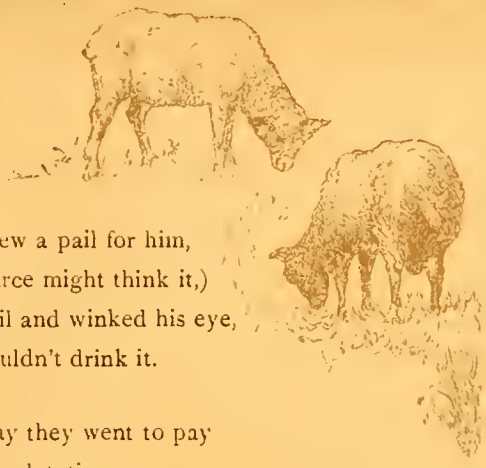
For spite of all the care of Ruth,
And all the love of Mary,
This lamb was a misguided youth,
Most crooked and contràry.

On Sunday, when they went to church,
And wished to be without him,
He used to wander up the aisle,
And stop and stare about him.

And when the parson and the clerk
Looked stern at Ruth and Mary,
They wished they did not own a lamb
So crooked and contràry.

He used to bleat most piteously
When they came up the mountain,
As if to say "I am so dry,
I'd like to drink the fountain!"





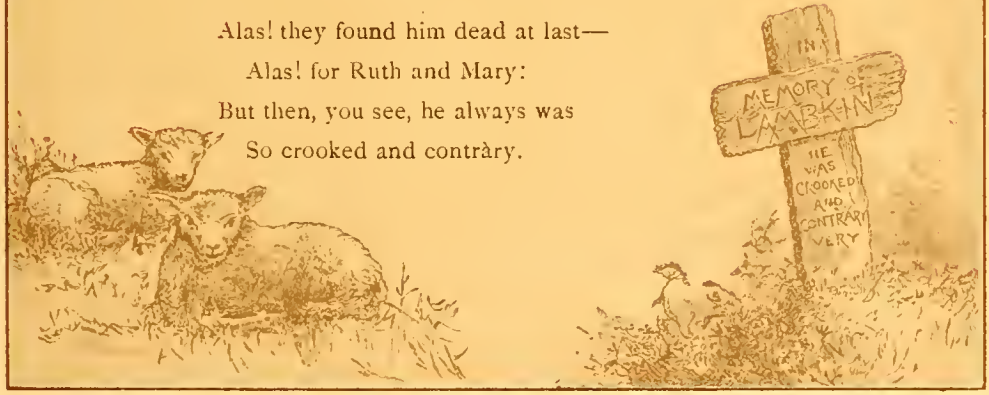
But when they drew a pail for him,
(You really scarce might think it,)
He wagged his tail and winked his eye,
And simply wouldn't drink it.

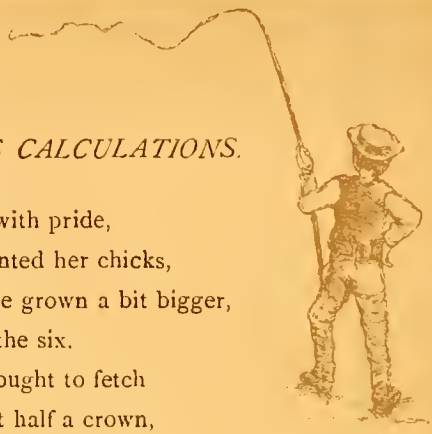
It chanced one day they went to pay
Their morning salutation,
But though they called, he never came,
Much to their consternation.

They sought him high, they sought him low,
But no! they could not find him,
They said "He will, he must come back,
And bring his tail behind him."

They sought him up the windy cliff,
And down the ferny hollow,
And still they said "He can't be lost!"
And still their feet did follow.

Alas! they found him dead at last—
Alas! for Ruth and Mary:
But then, you see, he always was
So crooked and contrary.





MINNIE'S CALCULATIONS.

Said Minnie with pride,
As she counted her chicks,
"When they're grown a bit bigger,
I'll sell all the six.
And as each ought to fetch
At the least half a crown,
I can quite well afford me
A new Sunday gown."

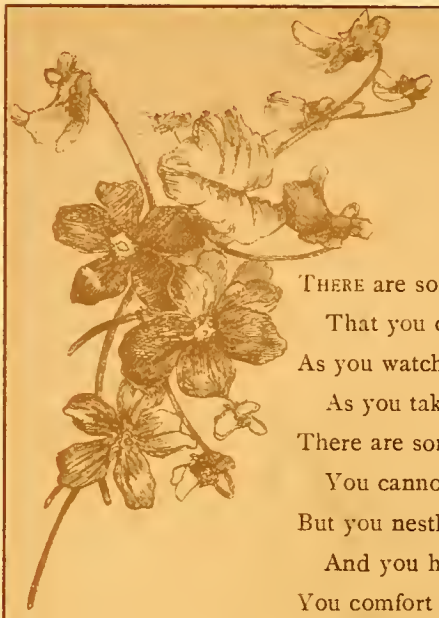
Alas for our castles!
How soon they all slip!
The cat ate one chicken,
And one got the pip;
And while mourning their brother
And sister, the four
Were crushed by the carter-boy
Slamming the door.

Don't reckon your chickens
Before they are hatched,
Is a proverb some fancy
Can never be matched.
But I think that this other
Deserves to be told:—
Don't count on their value
Until they are sold.

DREAMS.

Sometimes, beneath the brightest skies,
The children pause amid their play,
With parted lips and earnest eyes
In silence looking far away.
We may not know, we cannot see
The wonder-world whereon they gaze;
Heaven grant, whate'er their dreams may be,
They find them true in after days!
Dreaming sit the children,
Pausing in their play,
Dreaming of what is, ah! so sweet,
Because, because so far away.

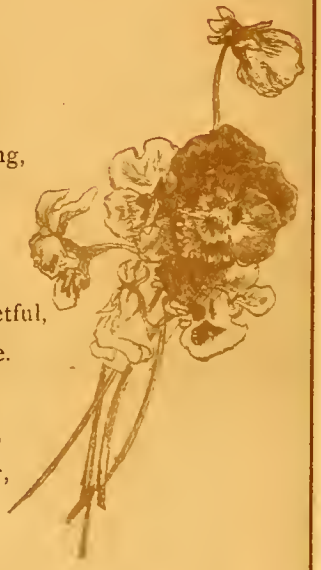
And we too have our dreams, our own,
Amid the rush and toil of life,
Our dreams of days and things long flown,
That come like peace comes, after strife.
Old hands we feel, old eyes we see,
Within our ears old voices ring;
They are but dreams, maybe, maybe,
But oh! the blessing that they bring.
Dreaming like the children,
We dream from day to day,
Dreaming of what is, ah! so sweet,
Because, because so far away.

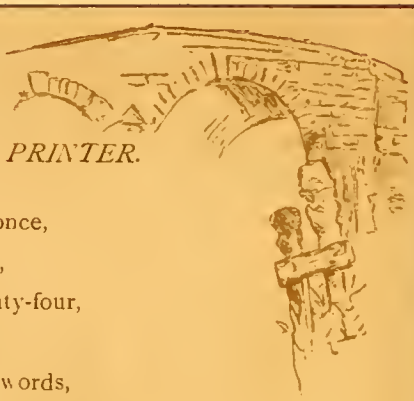


SORROWS.

THERE are sorrows, little children,
That you cannot understand,
As you watch our tears in wonder,
As you take us by the hand.
There are sorrows, little children,
You cannot bear them yet,
But you nestle close beside us,
And you help us to forget.
You comfort us, my darlings,
And yet you know not how;
You show us Heaven is near us,
Though our tears may blind us now.

There are little ones in Heaven,
Gone a little while before,
And they stand, to watch us coming,
Beside the golden door.
There are little ones in Heaven,
They are calling you and me,
When our hearts have grown forgetful,
And our feet would wayward be.
We can hear them, if we listen,
We may meet them all one day,
When our tears shall fall no longer,
And the shadows flee away!



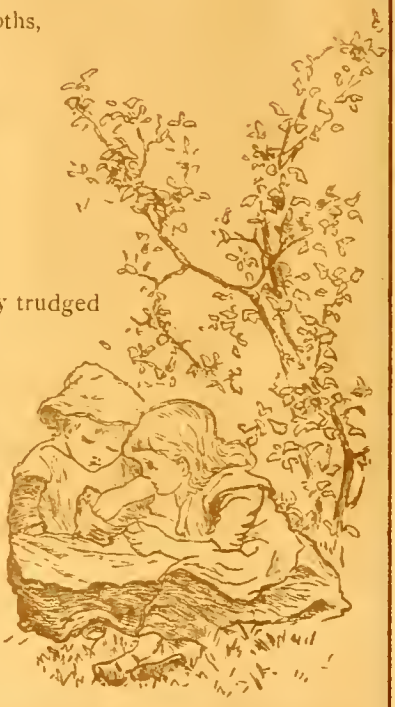


THE POET AND THE PRINTER.

Two little girls—I met them once,
But quite forget their name,
You'll find them on page twenty-four,
The printer is to blame,
The picture ought to face the words,
But there! it's all the same.

Two little girls, as I remarked,
They left their snug abode,
Because they thought their dinner must
Taste better on the road,
For forks and spoons and tablecloths,
They really incommode.

The ditch is far, far pleasanter
Than any high-backed chair,
I'm sure you will agree with them
If you'll observe them there;
And when they'd finished, off they trudged
All thro' the summer air.



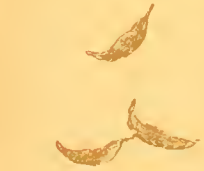
At last they reached a bridge (the bridge
You'll see on twenty-five),
And on the bridge those little girls
Are hanging all alive;
It's marvellous how hanging
Will make some children thrive!

They pondered which was best, to be
Upon the bridge or under,
And what they'd do suppose the bridge
Were just to split asunder,
But as they couldn't settle that,
They gave it up in wonder.

Now, had these children dined at home,
I think I may explain,
We never should have seen them here
At dinner in the lane:
Unless when they had dined at home
They'd dined out here again.

And had the bridge been never built
I think it must appear
These children ne'er had found it, though
They'd sought from year to year;
So, how they could have hung on it,
Is not exactly clear.

And had I said, when I was asked,
"I cannot sing in winter,
I've run my throat against a door,
And spiked it with a splinter;"—
It would have put the artists out,
And much annoyed the printer!



JCS

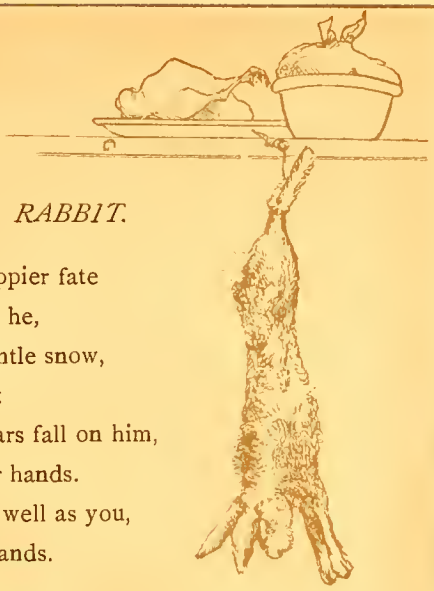
HARRY'S SOLILOQUY.

"There's ne'er a kitty so sweet and so pretty,
There's ne'er such a kitty I've seen in my life;
"I'm certain," said Harry, "if ever I marry,
I shall only want kitty, a house, and a wife."

"This dear old barrow is nice, though it's narrow,
It will do very well to take us about;
For my income of course is too small to keep horses,
But that doesn't matter, we'll manage without."

But alas! for the dreams of the barrow and kitten,
His father's old pointer came back from the wood;
And the poor little pussy with terror was smitten,
And scampered away as fast as she could.

And the gardener returned from his evening ablution,
And trundled the barrow straight off to the shed;
And Mary arrived, and with stern resolution
Just carried off Harry and put him to bed.

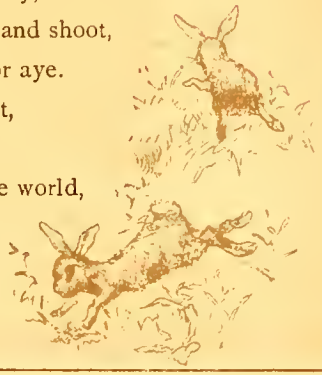


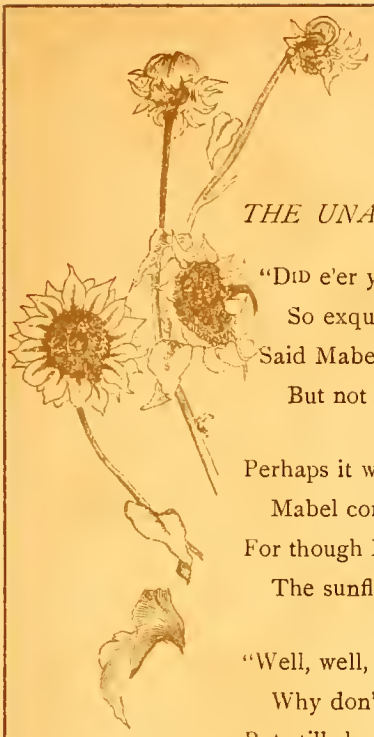
THE DEAD RABBIT.

Weep on! he has a happier fate
  Than many such as he,
To lie there in the gentle snow,
  And die so quietly:
To feel your warm tears fall on him,
  To feel your tender hands.
You *know* he feels as well as you,
You *know* he understands.

He might have now been dying
  Shot by a cruel gun;
With panting heart and glazing eye
  For life he might have run.
E'en now he might be hanging
  Above your larder shelves,
And you, you might, indeed you might,
  Have eaten him yourselves.

Weep on! you will not better it;
  Or change the world's old way,
For men will hunt and course and shoot,
  Though you should weep for aye.
Weep on! be not ashamed of it,
  You'll own in after years,
That *you yourselves,* if not the world,
  Are better for your tears.





THE UNAPPRECIATIVE KITTEN.

"Did e'er you see a flow'r like that,
So exquisitely pretty?"
Said Mabel to her Kitty-cat;
But not a word said Kitty.

Perhaps it was in her delight
Mabel contrived to squeeze her,
For though Kit stared with all her might,
The sunflow'r did not please her.

"Well, well, why don't you answer me?
Why don't you say it's pretty?"
But still she could or would not see,—
She was perverse, was Kitty.

"Sweet mistress, pray restrain your ire,"
Said Kit in trepidation;
"Why must I say that I admire,
When I've no admiration?"

"Don't ask me that, you stupid cat,"
Said Mabel in a passion;
"You must, you shall admire,—because,
Because it is the fashion!"

J.C.S.

THE CAT'S SOLILOQUY.

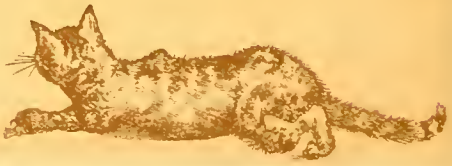
An open cage, some feathers fair,
Two little maidens crying,
And Pussy seated on a chair,
The mournful scene espying.

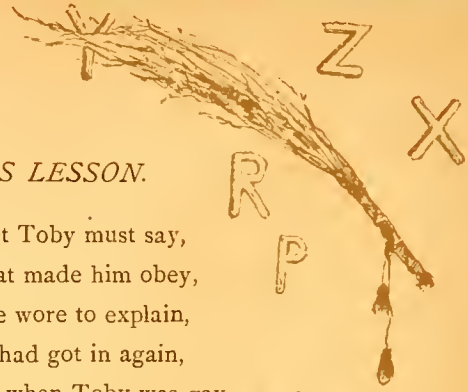
Tear after tear rolls down each cheek,
Sob after sob arises,
While Puss, as well as she can speak,
Calmly soliloquises!

"If they would keep a bird in cage,
They should not leave it undone;
For that's the tale in every jail
From Panama to London.

Their ducks and chicks they pet and feed,
And yet I've often noted,
They eat the very birds indeed
To which they're most devoted.

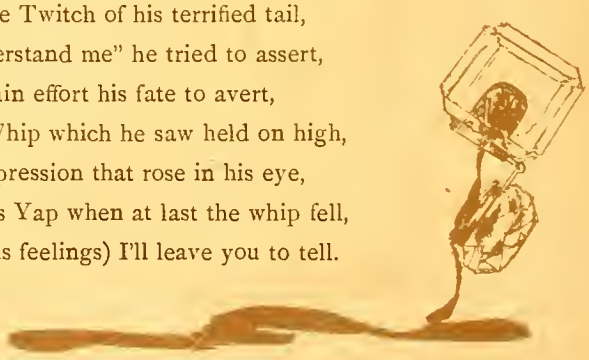
Then wherefore look so cross and sour,
Why make this sad commotion?
Why should not I a bird devour
For whom I've *no* devotion!"





TOBY'S LESSON.

A was the Alphabet Toby must say,
B was the Birch that made him obey,
C was the Collar he wore to explain,
D the Disgrace he had got in again,
E was the Evening when Toby was gay,
F was the Fate that befell him next day,
G was the Grave look on Muriel's face,
H was the Hist'ry of Toby's disgrace:—
I was the Ink that he spilt on the floor,
J was his Jump to get out of the door,
K was the Kick that he got as he past,
L was the Lesson—alas! not the last,
M was the Milk that he stole from the cat,
N was the Nap that he took after that,
O was the Owl that gave him a fright,
P was the Poaching he went for at night,
Q was his Queer look all dirty and worn,
R his Return somewhat early next morn,
S was his Smile that would not avail,
T was the Twitch of his terrified tail,
U "Understand me" he tried to assert,
V, his Vain effort his fate to avert,
W, the Whip which he saw held on high,
X, the Xpression that rose in his eye,
Y was his Yap when at last the whip fell,
Z (like his feelings) I'll leave you to tell.



MEE

SELINA'S DESTINY.

Selina Sophonisba Ann
Had a soul above a frying-pan,
And, when her mother to cook began,
She took to her heels and away she ran.

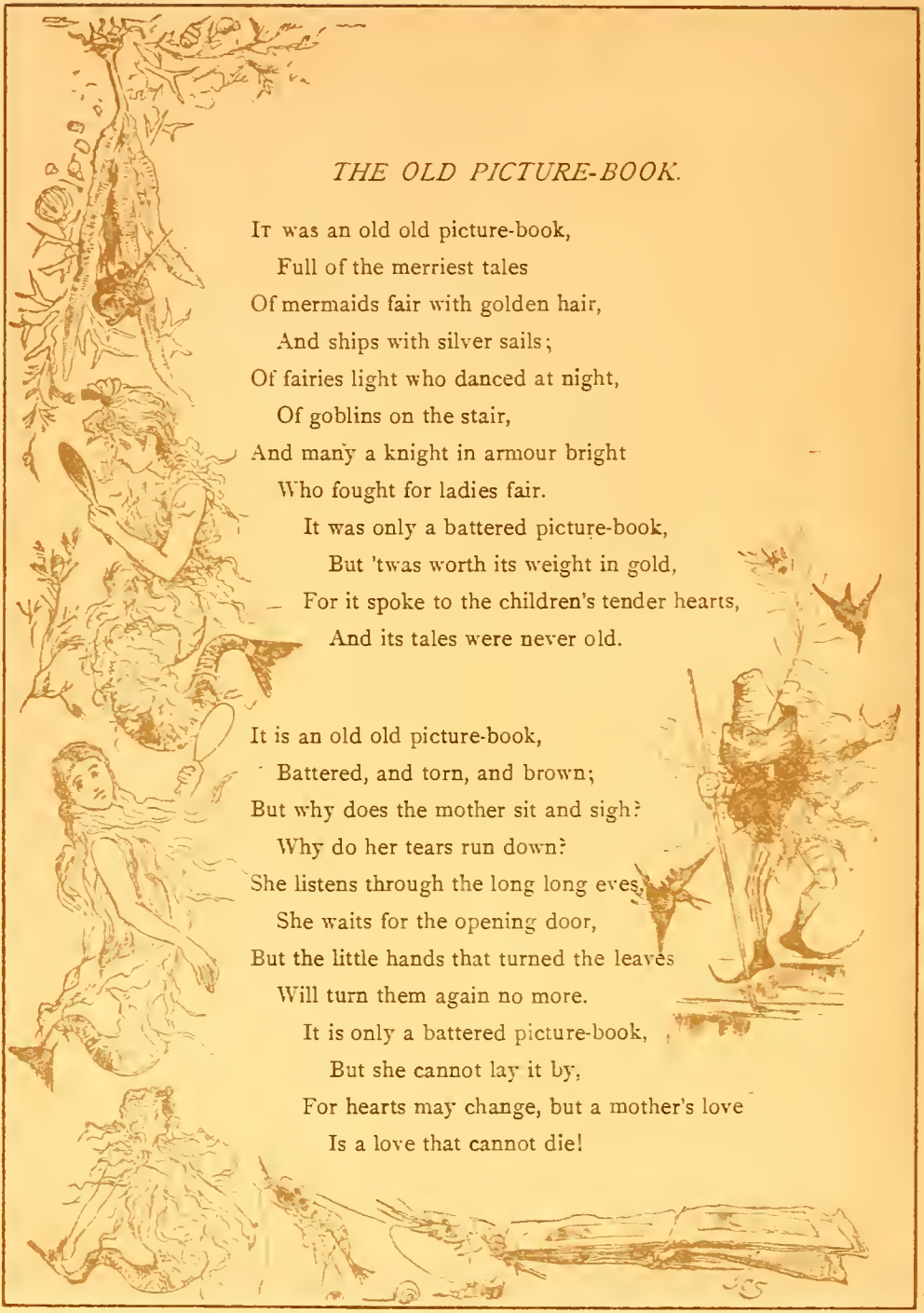
Selina Sophonisba, she
Stood all day long 'neath the apple tree,
Till she became most dreadfull*ee*
What is commonly callèd hungar*ee*!

Selina Sophonisba Ann
About her dinner to think began,
But the voice of a little Fairy-man
Said, "Don't go back to the frying pan,

"Stay here beneath the apple tree,
And you will find your destin*ee*,
A prince is coming of high degree,
Who will make you queen of his fair countr*ee*."

The prince came not: and the moments ran,
And her thoughts to supper to turn began,
So Selina Sophonisba Ann
Went gladly back to the frying-pan.

F.C.S.



THE OLD PICTURE-BOOK.

It was an old old picture-book,
Full of the merriest tales
Of mermaids fair with golden hair,
And ships with silver sails;
Of fairies light who danced at night,
Of goblins on the stair,
And many a knight in armour bright
Who fought for ladies fair.
It was only a battered picture-book,
But 'twas worth its weight in gold,
For it spoke to the children's tender hearts,
And its tales were never old.

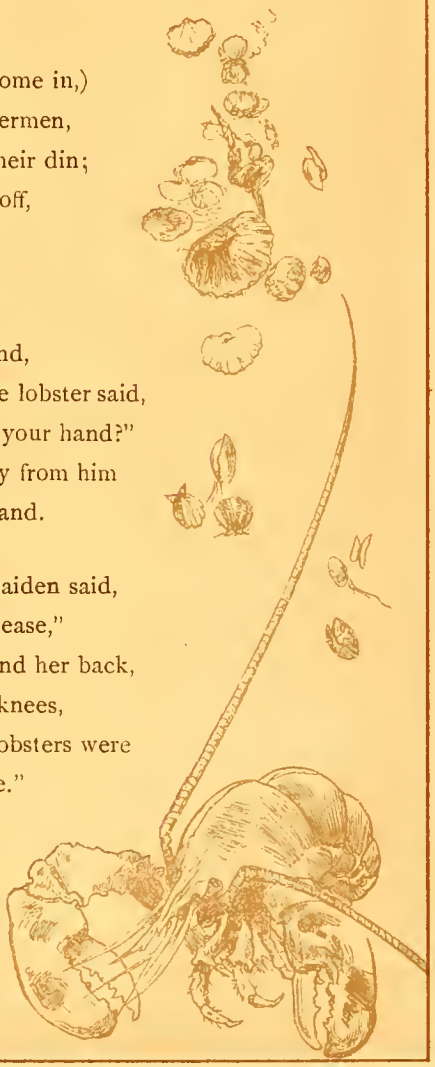
It is an old old picture-book,
Battered, and torn, and brown;
But why does the mother sit and sigh?
Why do her tears run down?
She listens through the long long eves,
She waits for the opening door,
But the little hands that turned the leaves
Will turn them again no more.
It is only a battered picture-book,
But she cannot lay it by,
For hearts may change, but a mother's love
Is a love that cannot die!

THE LOBSTER AND THE MAID.

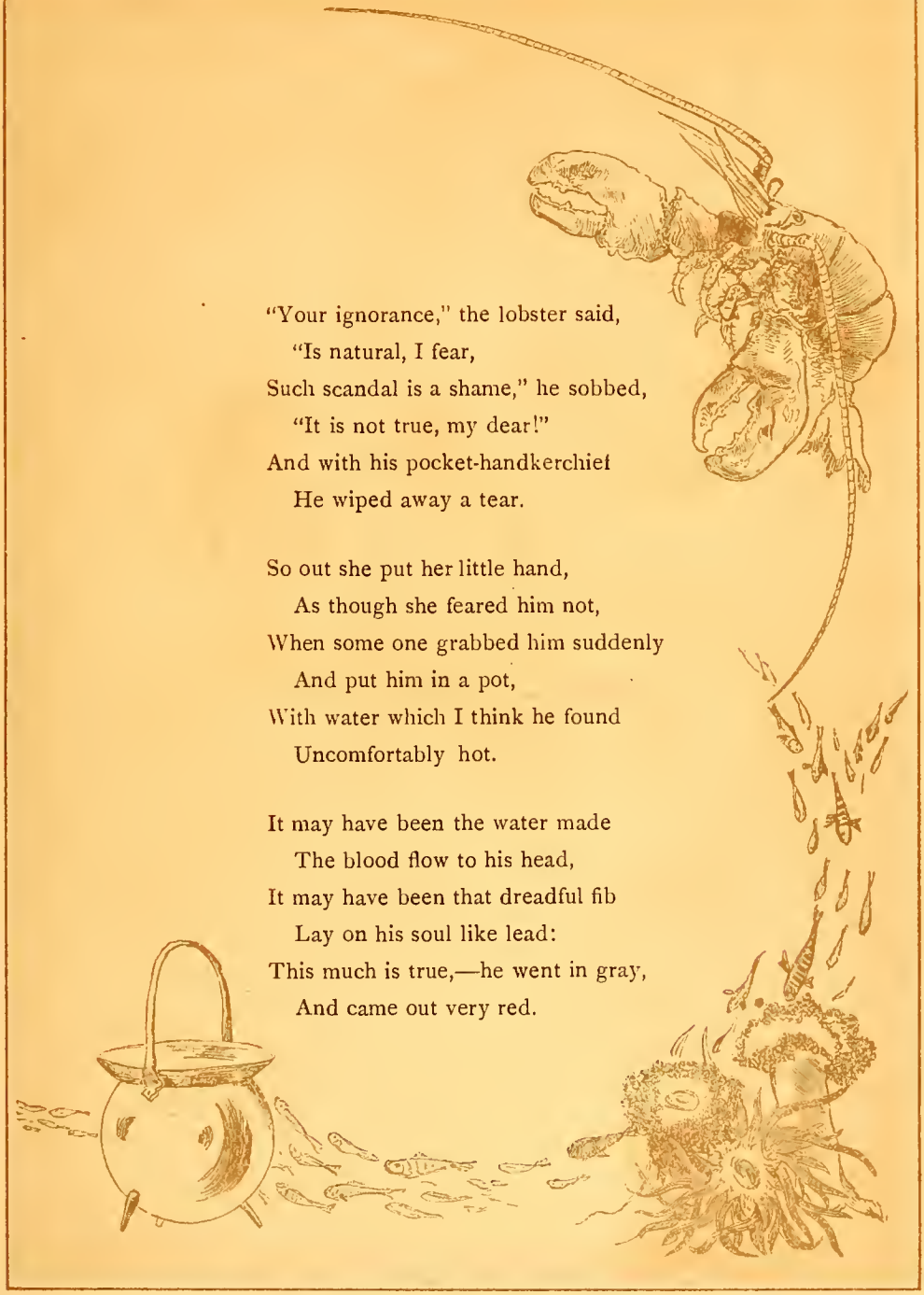
He was a gentle lobster,
(The boats had just come in,)
He did not love the fishermen,
He could not stand their din;
And so he quietly stole off,
As if it were no sin.

She was a little maiden,
He met her on the sand,
"And how d'you do?" the lobster said,
"Why don't you give your hand?"
For why she edged away from him
He *could* not understand.

"Excuse me, Sir," the maiden said,
"Excuse me, if you please,"
And put her hands behind her back,
And doubled up her knees,
"I always thought that lobsters were
A little apt to squeeze."



She was a little maiden,
He met her on the sand,
"And how d'you do?" the lobster said
"Why don't you give your hand"
For why she edged away from him
He could not understand.
J.C.S.



"Your ignorance," the lobster said,
"Is natural, I fear,
Such scandal is a shame," he sobbed,
"It is not true, my dear!"
And with his pocket-handkerchief
He wiped away a tear.

So out she put her little hand,
As though she feared him not,
When some one grabbed him suddenly
And put him in a pot,
With water which I think he found
Uncomfortably hot.

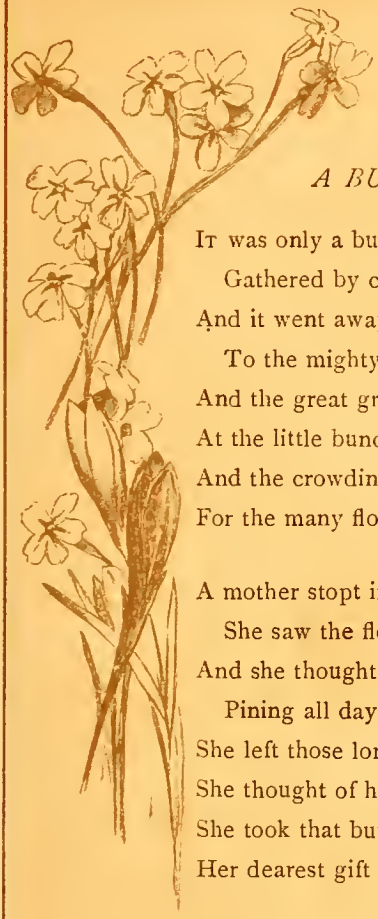
It may have been the water made
The blood flow to his head,
It may have been that dreadful fib
Lay on his soul like lead:
This much is true,—he went in gray,
And came out very red.

NO THANK YOU, TOM.

They met, when they were girl and boy,
Going to school one day,
And "Wont you take my peg-top, dear?"
Was all that he could say.
She bit her little pinafore,
Close to his side she came,
She whispered "No! no, thank you Tom,"
But took it all the same.

They met one day the selfsame way,
When ten swift years had flown;
He said, "I've nothing but my heart,
But that is yours alone."
"And won't you take my heart?" he said,
And called her by her name;
She blushed and said "No, thank you, Tom,"
But took it all the same.

And twenty, thirty, forty years
Have brought them care and joy,
She has the little peg-top still
He gave her when a boy.
"I've had no wealth, sweet wife," says he,
"I've never brought you fame:"
She whispers "No! no, thank you, Tom!
You've loved me all the same!"



A BUNCH OF FLOWERS.

It was only a bunch of flow'rets wild,
Gathered by children one morning fair;
And it went away in the twilight gray
To the mighty city's din and glare.
And the great grand flow'rs in the market smiled
At the little bunch of flow'rets wild;
And the crowding passers had but a care
For the many flow'rs that were rich and rare.

A mother stopt in the market place,
She saw the flow'rets shining there,
And she thought of her child, with his wan, thin face,
Pining all day in the London square.
She left those lordly, blazing flow'rs,
She thought of her far-off childhood hours;
She took that bunch of flow'rets wild—
Her dearest gift to her crippled child.

And she spoke to him of the thousand ones
Who toiled in the city hour by hour,
Who never had seen the country suns,
And never had plucked a country flow'r.
And a new light shone in his mournful eyes,
He hushed his sad, complaining cries;
For that little bunch of flow'rets wild
Had changed the life of the crippled child.

Hark!
the
Herald
Angels
Sing.
MEE

MEE

THE CHILDREN'S SONG

What is the song the children hear,
O pealing bells, O Christmas bells,
Echoing high and low,
When skies are dark and winds are drear,
What is the song the children hear
Across the winter snow?
Christ is born (the joy-bells ring)
Christ is born to be your King,
Christ has come from Heaven to bring
Peace to earth below.

What is the song the children sing,
A carol sweet all hearts to greet,
Good news for high and low?
What is the news the children bring,
What is the song the children sing
As through the streets they go?
Christ is born (the children sing),
Christ is born to be our King,
Christ has come from Heaven to bring
Peace to earth below.

Christ
is
born
In
Bethle=
=hem.
MEE

A BOUGH OF HOLLY.

He sat on Christmas morn alone,
No friend to bid him cheer;
He missed them not, though all were gone,
Who loved him yester-year.
And gaily rang the Christmas bells,
Their wondrous tale of old;
He heard no meaning in their sound,
He sate and hugged his gold.

He watched the happy folks go by,
He scowled to see them glad,
And then a little maid drew nigh,
A holly bough she had.
She lifts her pleading face to him,
She begs in accents wild:
What is it makes his eyes grow dim?
Why does he call the child?—

He seems to see his mother's face,
Who died long years ago,
And the holly bough he knelt to place
Upon her grave of snow.
He listened to the Christmas bells,
He felt their meaning then:
Peace upon earth, and in his heart
Peace and good-will to men!

GCS.

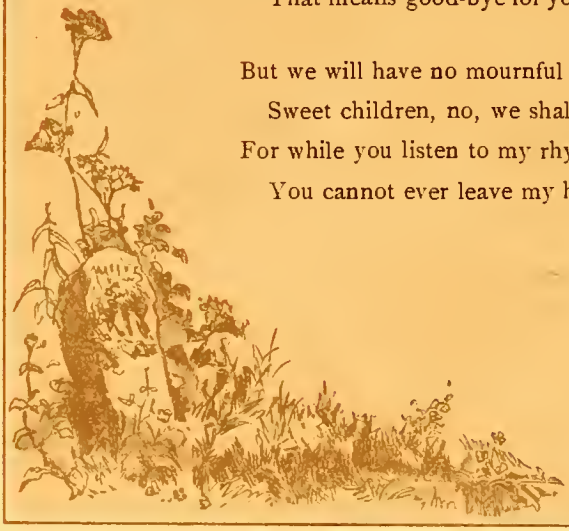
THE END.

The old milestone is reached at last,
And night will be upon us soon;
The western light is changing fast,
And slowly climbs the crescent moon.

The path that we have trod erewhile
Stretches behind us, growing gray,
And here we stand beside the stile
That ends our journey for to-day.

Our twilight talks have gone so fast,
Like all things glad, it so must be;
The old milestone is reached at last,
That means good-bye for you and me.

But we will have no mournful chimes,
Sweet children, no, we shall not part;
For while you listen to my rhymes,
You cannot ever leave my heart!



THE
END

NEW YORK
E P DUTTON & COMPANY
39. WEST TWENTY THIRD STREET.